

**GUIDE FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PERSONNEL  
ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11  
ALL AGES**

The anniversary promises to be the subject of expanded media coverage. As adults this may bring up some old feelings and/or generate some new issues for us. This is especially true for children as well. We need to help the children in our schools deal with this stressful time. This may be a real challenge as some of these children will be new to us. The following are suggestions that might be helpful for dealing with the children in your school:

1. Children need to be reminded that these events are not happening now.
2. Some children, especially the very young, may not have been exposed to the events before. Because of the expanded media coverage this may be their first exposure.
3. This anniversary may bring up issues of stereotyping and blame. This needs to be addressed directly and quickly.
4. Advise teachers not to have the television or radio on all day. This might lead to anxiety. Any time spent listening or watching the events should include discussion time as well.
5. Since children may be concerned about their safety and security, this may be a good time to review and update the school's safe school plan. This can then be shared with the school staff, students and parents.
6. As a result of 9/11, and for some time afterward, many people experienced positive feelings from joining together and helping others. This would be a good time to renew those feelings with activities that encourage all of us to help one another. Have older students in some way help the younger students in your school. Have the younger children do something nice for the older students. Design projects for the year to help foster that feeling.
7. The anniversary may produce or revive feelings of anxiety. If children or adults express feelings of anxiety, discuss limiting the amount of time they watch and listen to the events. Suggest they try things such as exercising, taking a walk, reading a good book, listening to some soothing music and/or taking a warm bath to help them relax.
8. If a person indicates that he/she has been anxious since 9/11 or if new symptoms exist and they persist for six months, make a referral to the nearest mental health facility.

9. If a child or adult has experienced a loss (such as death of family member, friend, animal, incarceration of a family member, divorce or separation of parents), the anniversary of 9/11 may bring back the feeling of that loss all over again. He/she may need additional help in dealing with those feelings. The same may be true for someone who has experienced trauma.

## **GUIDE FOR TEACHERS: ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11 ALL AGES**

The anniversary promises to be the subject of expanded media coverage. As adults, the anniversary of 9/11 may bring up some old feelings or even some new issues for us. This is especially true for children as well. We need to help the children in our classes deal with this stressful time. This will be a real challenge for us, as many of these children will be new to us. The following are suggestions that might be helpful for dealing with children in your class:

1. Some children, especially very young children, may not have been previously exposed to the events before. Due to the expanded media coverage, this may be their first exposure.
2. Children need to be reminded that these events are not happening now.
3. You need to be available to answer children's questions and listen to what they have to say regarding the events of 9/11.
4. This anniversary may bring up issues of stereotyping and blame. This needs to be addressed directly and quickly.
5. Discussion will focus on what we have learned from this tragic event. Include topics such as:
  - a) How many remember 9/11?
  - b) What do you remember about it?
  - c) What is one thing that stands out for you?
  - d) How many were afraid that there would be other attacks?  
Did that prove to be the case? (Anthrax was not a terrorist activity.)
  - e) Do we need to still be afraid?
  - f) How have people come together to help each other?
  - g) What can we still do to help each other?
6. Children are concerned with safety and security. Discussion could focus on what the school is doing to make children feel safe (e.g. Safe School Plans) and could

help children develop plans for home as well as school. This discussion can branch out to include such things as natural disaster planning.

7. If you choose to watch the anniversary events on TV in the classroom, limit the amount of time this is done. Be sure the viewing is accompanied by a discussion.
8. Some children may become re-traumatized by the anniversary. If you see changes in a child's behavior, contact the school counselor, nurse, psychologist, social worker or principal. If these people are not available, contact the child's parent and make a referral to a community mental health agency.

## **GUIDE FOR PARENTS: ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11 ALL AGES**

The anniversary of 9/11, with its promises of extensive media coverage, may bring up some old feelings or even introduce new concerns for us as adults. This may also be true for your child. These suggestions may help you to support your child through this anniversary period.

1. Explain to children that they may see things on TV, in newspapers, etc. regarding 9/11. Be sure children understand that this event is not happening now.
2. Limit the amount of time children view TV concerning the events of 9/11. Watch the TV programs with your child.
3. Be available to talk to your child and answer questions. If you are unsure of what he/she is asking, be sure to ask for clarification. Keep your answer short and simple, especially for young children. If you don't know the answer, it is all right to say you don't know.
4. Be available to listen to your child.
5. Talk about feelings and reactions your child may have.
6. Be aware that children, who were not previously exposed to the events of 9/11, may be exposed now.
7. Avoid unnecessary separation from your child. Children may become anxious at this time.
8. Keep to a routine.
9. Discuss issues of safety and security.

10. If you notice any changes in your child's behavior and are concerned, contact your school counselor, nurse, psychologist, social worker, principal, or your physician.

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